Promise Neighborhoods Pre-Award Webinar #3: Notice Requirements

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ELSON NASH: Good afternoon, everyone. Welcome to the Promise Neighborhoods Pre-Award Webinar #3: Notice Requirements. This is the third webinar in the four-webinar series of pre-award technical assistance. Please remember we have the last webinar scheduled for this Thursday at 2 p.m. That webinar will cover the logic model and evidence.

Today, through the leadership of the Center for the Study of Social Policy, our technical assistance contractor for program content area over the last 5 years, we will cover some of the key aspects of the selection criteria.

I will now turn it over Juanita Gallion, Senior Associate with the Center for the Study of Social Policy. She will be joined by Michael Bochnovic, Program and Research Assistant.

JUANITA GALLION: Thank you, Elson, and thank you, everyone, for joining us today. Michael actually will kick us off with a little bit of background information about the webinars, some housekeeping, and an overview of today's agenda.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: All right. Good afternoon, everybody. Before we kick things off, we just wanted to connect you to some of the previous webinars that we have already held as part of this technical assistance series. So, as mentioned before, this is the second-to-last pre-award webinar in the series of four. All four webinars are recorded and posted to the Department of Education website the first business day after the live webinar, so you can see the link on the slide on your screen right now. It's PromiseNeighborhoods.ed.gov/neighborhoods and under the How to Apply for a Promise Neighborhoods Grant tab.

We have the final webinar on Logic Model and Evidence Requirements coming up on Thursday, July 28th, also at 2 p.m., Eastern Daylight time. So, if you have not registered, the registration link is also on this slide for you.

The first two webinars we have held, the "General Overview" and the "Data and Systems Requirements" webinars, are already archived, so you can go to that link on the Department of Education website, and you can watch a recording of the previous presentations if you missed

them or want to review anything. In addition, there are also slides available, and transcripts will be made available soon.

So moving on to some logistics for today, we just wanted to share a couple of housekeeping items. First, as I mentioned before, this webinar will be recorded and posted the first business day after this presentation, so no later than close of business tomorrow. It will be available for you to review.

Secondly, to reduce background noise, we have muted everybody's phones. If you do have relevant questions at any time, please feel free to use the Questions pane on your Webinar control panel. We will be monitoring questions throughout the entire webinar, and we have planned time to take questions. While we will try to do our best to answer all of the questions that come in, due to time constraints, we might not be able to answer all of the questions, but if we cannot get to everyone's questions, we will hold onto the questions that we get, and we will answer electronically. So, once again, those relevant questions that we cannot answer today during, we will respond to you electronically.

So, quickly, the agenda for today, today's presentation focuses on Notice Requirements for the 2016 Promise Neighborhoods Notice of Funding Available. We are going to be taking a deeper dive into the five subsections of Section V, "Selection Criteria." Those five subsections are the Need for the Project, the Quality of the Project Design, Quality of Project Services, Quality of the Management Plan, and Adequacy of Resources. So we will be looking at both the specific language in the notice as well as definitions specific to this notice that are embedded in that language. Throughout the presentation, we will also provide suggestions for outside resources to help guide you through specific pieces of the selection criteria.

Now, just a small disclaimer, the outside resources are suggestions that we have put together and are presenting to you. They do not necessarily reflective of Department of Education policy and practice.

So, moving forward and to take a deeper look at the "Selection Criteria," we will turn it back over to Juanita.

JUANITA GALLION: Thank you, Michael. So the bulk of today's webinar, as Michael said, is going to focus on Section V, the "Selection Criteria" of the Notice of Funding Available. There is a link to the PDF of the notice from the Government Publishing Office on the screen. It's also available on the Department of Ed website. The maximum score for all of the selection criteria is 100 points. That's the maximum score that any application may receive. In addition, there is additional points offered under the competitive preference priorities. That combined with the selection criteria can lead to a total of 108 points.

Just a note on the competitive preference priorities, these were covered in detail in the first webinar, so we won't be going into detail about the competitive preference priorities today. But we did want to mention a few things. There are four competitive preference priorities. They are one on improving early learning development and outcomes, one on quality affordable housing, one for those who also promise zones, and one with a focus on high school and transition to college. These are described more fully in the beginning of the notice on page 47, and for further information, you can review the slides and the recording of the first pre-award webinar that was hosted by the Department of Education that is at the link shown here.

So for the selection criteria for the 100 points, this is the breakdown on how the points are awarded, and for this competition, the selection criteria are taken from EDGAR and the 2011 Promise Neighborhoods NFP.

The 2016 Promise Neighborhoods implementation competition selection criteria includes the "Need for the Project," which is up to 15 points; Quality of Project Design, up to 30 points; Quality of Project Services, up to 20 points; Quality of the Management Plan, up to 20 points; and Adequacy of Resources, up to 15 points.

We are going to now dive into each of the sub-areas of the selection criteria beginning with "Need for the Project." It's worth 15 points, and it contains three descriptive subsections that provide further details.

In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers, number one, the magnitude or severity of the problems to be addressed by the proposed project as described by indicators of need and other relevant indicators identified in part by the needs assessment and segmentation analysis; number two, the extent to which the geographically defined area has been described; and three, the extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.

So you will see here, we have taken that subsection and broke it down to take a closer look, and the format on this slide is how we will be walking through the rest of the selection criteria, where we will talk about the text taken from the notice itself, any relevant definitions for you to pay attention, and any resources that we are suggesting. As Michael previously noted, these resources are suggestions. They reflect the views of their respective authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Department of Education. Rather, they are suggestions that you may find helpful as you develop your application.

So, for this subsection (1) under Need for the Project, there are two definitions for you to look closely at. The first is the "indicators of need," which is used to refer to all available data that describes the education need and family and community support need. There are 15 indicators that intend to measure 10 results that Promise Neighborhoods aims to achieve. These results

and indicators form the structure of the Promise Neighborhoods data collection and the results-driven framework. For example, the measure on how students successfully transition from middle school grades to high school, the indicator of "Graduation Rate" is used. The full details of the 10 results and 15 indicators are found on page 46 of the notice.

Second, segmentation analysis is another important piece of this subsection. Segmentation analysis means the process of grouping and analyzing data from children and families in the geographic area proposed to be served according to the indicators of need, as they are defined in the notice, and other relevant indicators.

For guidance, the suggested resource, the "Planning a Promise Neighborhood Guide," provides some additional thinking on pieces of the planning, including the segmentation analysis. It includes strategies for addressing questions related to need such as how do the needs of the neighborhood map against your local Promise Neighborhoods initiatives, mission, values, and ability to improve specific outcomes related to those needs. Also, if you want more detailed information around the data, the segmentation analysis, we encourage you to listen to the "Data and Systems Requirements" webinar that was held on July 22nd for more information and for the slides relevant to those sections.

Under "Need for the Project" subsection (2), this focuses on the extent to which the geographically defined area has been described. This is a requirement that was also in the 2011 Notice of Final Priorities for Promise Neighborhoods, and it calls for applicants to describe the location of their proposed Promise Neighborhood.

While there are no definitions to call out at this point, it is important to note that under Absolute Priority 1, applicants may propose to serve multiple, non-contiguous geographically defined areas. In those cases where your target areas are not contiguous, the applicant must explain the rationale for including non-contiguous areas. If you have other questions about Absolute Priority 1 or other the other Absolute Priorities, we would also refer you back to the General Overview webinar hosted by the U.S. Department of Education and the slides from that webinar.

Subsection (3) under "Need for the Project" then focuses on the extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and how they will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses. A resource here that you may find helpful is the "Developmental Pathway for Achieving Promise Neighborhood Results." This document provides guidance on how to identify and articulate gaps or weaknesses that will be addressed by the proposed project. It doesn't align 100 percent with the Promise requirements, so it will help you identify some of those. It may also give you some other insights into considering long-term planning on how to address those gaps.

Section (b) is "Quality of Project Design." This is the second selection criteria. You may receive up to 30 points for the "Quality of Project Design."

The Secretary reviews each application to determine the quality of the project design, and in determining that quality of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors: the extent to which the applicant describes an implementation plan to create a complete continuum of solutions, including early learning through grade 12, college- and career-readiness, and family and community supports, without time and resource gaps, that will prepare all children in the neighborhood to attain an excellent education and successfully transition to college and a career and that will significantly increase the proportion of students in the neighborhood that are served by the complete continuum to reach scale over time; second, the extent to which the applicant documents that proposed solutions are based on the best available evidence including, where available, strong or moderate evidence; number three, the extent to which the applicant identifies existing neighborhood assets and programs supported by Federal, State, local, and private funds that will be used to implement a continuum of solutions; number four, the extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible; and five, the extent to which the proposed project is supported by strong theory.

So, with respect to subsection 1, there are two important definitions here to consider. The first is the continuum of solutions, which means solutions that do four things: that include the programs, policies, practices, services, systems, and supports that result in improving educational outcomes for children from cradle through college and career; two, are the best of the available evidence, including, where available, strong or moderate evidence; three, are linked and integrated seamlessly; and four, include both education programs and family and community supports. For more details on all of those, we encourage you to look at page 48 of the notice.

Second, linked and integrated seamlessly with respect to the continuum of solutions means that solutions that have common outcomes, focus on similar milestones, support transitional time periods along the cradle-through-college-to-career pipeline, and address time and resource gaps that create obstacles for students in making academic progress.

For both definitions, there are two documents we have provided as optional resources. The first is the "Building a Culture of Results: A Guide to Emerging Practices in Promise Neighborhoods," which gathers information from across the current 11 implementation grantees and provides resources that they have developed and found useful in their continuum of solutions that is linked and integrated seamlessly. The guide uses materials from the FY11 and FY12 Promise Neighborhoods cohorts to articulate various methods for things like developing memorandums of understanding, connecting to data sources, and building partnerships.

The second document, once again, is the "Developmental Pathway: we shared earlier. This document describes how to work with partners from the early planning stages all the way through to getting to sustainability for your results. This may help you in identifying the way you link the different pieces of the continuum you are aiming to build.

With respect to subsection (b), there are several important definitions regarding evidence to pay attention to. Strong evidence means evidence from studies with designs that can support causal conclusions, i.e., studies with high internal validity, and studies that in total include enough of the range of participants and settings to support scaling up to the State, regional, or national level. So those would be studies with high external validity.

Moderate evidence means evidence from previous studies with designs that can support causal conclusions, studies with high internal validity, but have limited generalizability so it would have moderate external validity, or from studies with high external validity but moderate internal validity.

So understanding evidence and saying it can be tricky at times, so we recommend joining the "Logic Model and Evidence Requirements" webinar scheduled for this Thursday, July 28th, at 2 p.m., Eastern Daylight Time. Much of that webinar will actually devote the ability to talking about evidence, clarifying the definitions around strong and moderate evidence. You can register for that webinar by visiting the Office of Innovation and Improvement website that we noted here on this slide.

And with respect to subsection (3), again, pay attention to the focus on the continuum of solutions, as it's the critical component of the linear Promise Neighborhoods framework. This particular subsection asks you to demonstrate what resources already exist that will help implement your continuum. There is a website that we list on here that might be helpful that provides some tools and analysis on how to map community assets and looking at what resources currently exist in your community.

Just a note to make sure you read through the full instructions in the notice and instructions on how to identify assets and developing your continuum of solution. The resources that were mentioned here today are, again, just use the additional guidance if you decide you want or need that support.

Subsection (4) of "Quality of Project Design" focuses on the methods that an application proposes to use. One important term embedded in this requirement is "performance measures." Performance measures for Promise Neighborhoods are the percentage of implementation grantees that attain or exceed the annual goals that they establish and that are approved by the Department of Education for project indicators, improving systems, and leveraging resources.

Full details for these are provided on page 57 of the notice. What is important to bear in mind is the set of indicators and results that Promise Neighborhoods use to measure their performance. The 15 indicators and 10 distinct goals are listed in the guidance document, "Building a Culture of Results: A Guide to Emerging Practices in Promise Neighborhood," the resource we mentioned earlier as well.

For subsection (5), the important definition here is "strong theory." The "strong theory" means a rationale for the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice that also includes a logic model. There's more detail around that on page 52 of the notice, and to help fully understand the nuances of a strong theory, we highly recommend you join the fourth and final webinar on Thursday, July 28th, at 2 p.m., Eastern Time, which will focus on all of the evidence requirements and provide more detailed information around the logic model.

So we're going to pause here and take any questions that have come up so far. So let me ask Michael if there have been some questions.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Yeah. So we have a couple questions. I'm going to actually ask Elson to answer this first question: "Can an agency apply for a planning grant this time around for the Promise Neighborhoods?"

ELSON NASH: So there is no planning grant available this round. This round is only focused on implementation grants.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Great. Thank you. And then another question that we received that you might be able to answer, Elson, "Do all proposed solutions on the continuum have to have moderate or strong evidence, or can most of the proposed solutions be evidence-based with some that don't have documented evidence?"

ELSON NASH: It is really up to the applicant. So you will note in the notice, we say "best available." So it really depends on those solutions that the applicant chooses that fit their community and the schools and partners that you're working with. The word or the words there are "best available." Of course, we would like strong to moderate because we are looking at and are considering strong to moderate evidence, but it is not required. And I want to point that out because you really do have to go by what's best for your community. We don't want to have a square peg in a round hole just because you're trying to get strong or moderate evidence.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Great. Thank you. We're going to wait about another minute for other questions to come in. Please feel free to send your questions, as you have been, in the Questions pane.

We just received one. One of our participants wants to know, "Am I correct in thinking that applicants can select the education and community indicators that align with their needs assessment and are not obligated to address every indicator of Tables 1 and 2?"

ELSON NASH: So slightly wrong. So the indicators, 15 indicators, are definitely something that, as our grantees would tell you, are required. There are seven academic indicators and eight community family indicators. I think where the applicant might be having a little confusion around is on the family community side. It's the requirement of the solutions, meaning are you required to actually do those, and if you look in the notice, it actually says the requirement is on the academic side, meaning you should have academic solutions. But you will notice there is no requirement on the family community support. It's not to say that that's something that someone should just drop off because, once again, the interventions on the family-community support side are important, and it rounds out the model for Promise Neighborhoods.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Great. Thank you very much. It looks like this is a good point to move on and continue with the presentation. Please continue to send in questions, as you have been. I will do my best to make sure they are addressed today.

JUANITA GALLION: Thanks, Michael. So let's move into section (c), "Quality of Project Services." It is the third selection criteria. This one is worth 20 points.

The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, and in determining the quality of the project services, the Secretary considers, one, the likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will lead to improvement in the achievement of students as measured against rigorous academic standards; and two, creating formal and informal partnerships, including the alignment of the visions, theories of action, and theories of change described in its memorandum of understanding, and creating a system for holding partners accountable for performance in accordance with the memorandum of understanding.

Subjection 1 of criteria (c), "Quality of Project Services," is focused on a likelihood that your proposal will yield positive results for children in your geographic footprint. So to unpack this a little bit, think about how your plan will lead to improvement in student achievement of students as measured against rigorous academic standards. Use this section as an opportunity to describe the connections between your plan and your expected results. If you earlier described implementing Program X, then explain how Program X is going to positively impact Test Y or Result Z for the children in the neighborhood.

Subsection (2) speaks to creating formal and informal partnerships, aligning visions, and creating a system of accountability. One important lesson learned from the current Promise Neighborhoods implementation grantees is the importance of building strong relationships and formalizing those partner relationships. In the "Building a Culture of Results" document we

mentioned previously, there are actually two chapters devoted to those topics, one around establishing shared accountability among many stakeholders and one on maintaining accountability in the operation of a continuum. The lessons learned there under resources and tools include may help you consider ways that when you submit your proposal, there is a clear vision for accountability between the partners in your proposed Promise Neighborhood.

There are also two definitions to pay close attention to in subsection (2) here under "Quality of Project Services." One is theory of action. The second is theory of change. Theory of action means an organization's strategy regarding how, considering its capacity and resources, it will take the necessary steps and measures to accomplish its desired results. Theory of change means an organization's beliefs about how its inputs and early and intermediate outcomes relate to accomplishing long-term desired results. So there are more details around both of those definitions on page 52.

And, again, we'd like to really encourage you to listen in and participate on the fourth webinar this Thursday, July 28th because we will cover how to think about developing a theory of change, a theory of action, and again how that lives in a logic model, so another plug for Thursdays' webinar.

Selection criteria (d) is the "Quality of the Management Plan," and in this, applicants can earn up to 20 points.

Under this selection criterion, the Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, and in determining the quality of the management plan, the Secretary considers the following factors: one, how working with its neighborhood and its residents, the schools described in paragraph (2)(b) of Absolute Priority 1, the LEA in which those schools are located, Federal, State, and local government leaders, and other service providers; and two, collecting, analyzing, and using data for decision-making, learning, continuous improvement, and accountability, including whether the applicant has a plan to build, adapt, or expand a longitudinal data system that integrates student-level data from multiple sources in order to measure progress while still abiding by privacy laws and requirements.

So looking a little closer at that, subsection (1) includes a specific focus to Absolute Priority 1 (2)(b), which says an applicant must establish clear annual goals for evaluating progress in improving systems, such as changes in policies, environments, or organizations that affect children and youth in the neighborhood. We encourage you to check your State departments of education on their lists of the persistently lowest-achieving school and/or low-performing schools. You can always refer to pages 45, 46, and 47 for more details on what to include here, and just to mention, there's a lot of information on those pages around what needs to be included that we want to make sure you don't miss. Even though it's not all specifically called out here, it is expected to be included in this part of the selection criteria.

And so while Section V criteria (d), the "Quality of the Management Plan," subsection (1), it names out specifically (2) (b) of Absolute Priority 1, please make sure you go back and look at the complete parameters under Absolute Priority 1. There are five requirements under that priority just to bear in mind, and as a quick reminder, those five requirements are to describe the geographically defined area to be served and the level of distress in that area based on indicators of need, as defined earlier, and other relevant indicators. The statement of need in the neighborhood must be based, in part, on results of a comprehensive needs assessment and segmentation analysis, as defined in the notice. Applicants may propose to serve multiple, non-contiguous geographically defined areas. In cases where the target areas are not contiguous, the applicant must explain its rationale for including non-contiguous areas. Again, describing the strategy for building a continuum of solutions over time that addresses neighborhood challenges as identified in the needs assessment and segmentation analysis; explaining how you used the needs assessment and segmentation analysis to determine the children with the highest needs and explain how you will ensure that children in the neighborhood receive the appropriate services from the continuum of solutions; and describing the experience and lessons learned and how the applicant will build the capacity of its management team and project director.

So we also just highly recommend going back to the first webinar, where Department of Ed walks through all of the elements under Absolute Priority 1 that are expected to be in the application. Again, the "Building a Culture of Results" and some of the other resources we have listed may be helpful here in just making sure you include all of the required information.

Subsection (2) also focuses on the results-driven framework of Promise Neighborhoods. A useful resource that may help you better understand the data components of that is the webinar from July 22nd on "Data and Systems Requirements." There is a link for it here, and it was also shared previously—and another link to a results-based accountability guide, which provides a little more detail on having a results focus in your work, and there's a link to that here as well.

Finally, for selection criteria (e) is adequacy of resources, which is worth up to 15 points.

The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, and in determining the adequacy of resources, the Secretary considers, number one, the extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and to the anticipated results and benefits; and two, the extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan, the demonstrated commitment of any partners, evidence of broad support from stakeholders—so, for example, other LEAs, city government, and nonprofits, et cetera—critical to the project's long-term success, and more than one of these types of evidence.

So here, there's no definitions to call out for either of these. There's more information in the notice. We would call your attention under Absolute Priority 1, the cost-sharing and matching requirements, which are listed under page 52, Section III in "Eligibility Requirements." There are also several resources listed here, some that we mentioned earlier and just a few other additional resources from Promise Neighborhoods, and the Harlem Children's Zone offered up their business plan from years ago. And while it's a slightly different context, you may find it useful in thinking about how they describe their partnerships and long-term planning for the success of their work.

Finally, here is a list of resources. Many of these, we covered in different parts of the webinar. There's a few additional resources on here for you to work through, one on early learning in Promise Neighborhoods that builds on the work of the current implementation grantees and another on postsecondary success, which also lifts up some of the work from the current implementation grantee and other best practices that you may find useful in building out either one of those to—and the education spectrum. We would encourage you to again look at the previous webinars. There's some additional resources that the Urban Institute has shared in the "Data and Systems Requirements" webinar, and there will be some additional resources shared in this Thursday's webinar on Logic Model and Evidence Requirements.

So now we will see if we have some additional questions from any folks listening to the webinar.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Oh, yes. We do have questions. So to get started, can we provide an example of the performance measures definition?

ELSON NASH: It should be—let me look—in the application to see if there's the actual definition of performance measures. Why don't we go to the next question while we try to pull up that definition?

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Absolutely. So while we are waiting for that, we received a question asking "What about informal partnerships? Do they have to be on the MOU and have accountability that's been described?"

ELSON NASH: It really depends on the nature of the informal partnerships. I mean, in many ways, "informal" tends to kind of define itself in that they may not be your primary partners, and so with that in mind, once again, it's strictly up to you as the applicant.

What we've seen in the past is that applicants tend to stick to their primary partners in terms of having their MOUs, and it really depends on the relationship and the types of things that they are working towards jointly together.

So I would say I would leave the option open up to the applicant, but what we've seen in the past is that it has been the primary partners that they have gotten the MOUs from.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Great. Thank you. We also received a question, "Are there examples or standards of the needs assessment and segmentation analyses that we need to consult as a model for what to include in our needs assessment or segmentation analysis?"

ELSON NASH: There are no models per se, but all of you as applicants have the ability to look at previous applications on our website of the winning applications. So, from there, you will have an opportunity to review those applications on our website that peer reviewers have deemed as high-scored.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Great. Thank you. And just for those of you curious about the question about performance measures, we're still combing through the notice and seeing if there's a specific definition. It doesn't look like there is a specific definition. Could you maybe just speak more generally to what performance measures are and what you've seen in the past?

ELSON NASH: Yeah. I actually think two things. One, you should be able to look up—it made me think about it. There should be something regarding performance measures in the guidance document from the Urban Institute.

JUANITA GALLION: Yes.

ELSON NASH: So that's one tangible place, and oddly enough, when you—on Thursday, when we go through the logic model, there will be a definition of performance measures from one of the resources there, and that is the Kellogg Foundation link to logic models. Within that link, you will see information about performance measures and how performance measures and how performance measures can relate to logic models. So that's a preview for Thursday. It also gives a nod to both the Urban guidance document and also the document from the Kellogg Foundation that incorporates the logic model, and I believe performance measures are in that as well. But there is no hard-and-fast definition of performance measures.

JUANITA GALLION: And I would just also add, the clear impact, which there's a resource listed in here, previously of there is around results-based accountability also has some information around setting performance measures. So that might be another resource for folks to look at just for some guidance and ideas.

ELSON NASH: Yep. Absolutely.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Great. Thank you both. We have more questions rolling in. One recent one asks, "Do I understand correctly that only one MOU letter signed by all partners should be submitted?"

ELSON NASH: No. Generally speaking, there has been MOUs between the various partners. I can't give exact—I can't give you direction around whether you decide to have a singular MOU signed by all partners, but what I can say is that single MOU may not be as specific as you would

want, particularly if the different partners have different roles. So I'm not telling you what you should do, but it would seem that different partners have different roles, and you may want to be more specific with your MOUs.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Another question, this one is related to the adequacy of resources: "Could you please discuss cash versus in-kind resources requirements a little bit further?"

ELSON NASH: Sure. There is a dollar-for-dollar match in terms of our match, and 10 percent of the match can be cash. And that can be included with philanthropic resources, and it could be in-kind. So what you have probably seen are different types of match. It depends on—once again, some of your partners, you might have a bank that is fulfilling their CRA, community reinvestment requirements, and they are able to give you a cash match. Maybe that company also provides staff, maybe a loaned executive. That would be your in-kind. You might have a State partner also involved as a public match. Maybe they have staff or programmatic things that could be part of your match that is non-private. So there are various forms of match that our applicants and grantees have placed together.

We have allowed flexibility in terms of in-kind versus cash, but I think, overall, the point here is sustainability. Ultimately, what you should be thinking about—and I might be stepping a little bit out of line on this, but I'll step out of line because it's an important piece. I wouldn't cheat myself or my partners by suggesting that in-kind is the only way to go. Ultimately, with Promise Neighborhoods, you want to have a sustainable project, and part of sustainability is raising the necessary cash to continue the project. And so that really is the impetus behind the match, and sustainability of this project is critical. And it's also critical for you to think about it from the very beginning.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Thank you, Elson. And just as a quick follow-up to that, where could people find definitions of an in-kind match or see examples of what are eligible in-kind matches?

ELSON NASH: Good question.

JUANITA GALLION: Would those be in the applications that are on your website?

ELSON NASH: There probably are some in the applications on the website.

JUANITA GALLION: There might be some on the Promise Neighborhoods Institute website hosted by PolicyLink. I know they have some previous strong—I think some of the current implementation grantees programs. There may be some helpful information in the Harlem Children's Zones business plan that talk about their resources as examples.

ELSON NASH: Yep. And there should be also, if you look—and this is fairly technical. There actually are some definitions in-kind in what's called EDGAR, and EDGAR is the regulations that connect to this notice.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: And just one more detail on the subject of matching, can other Federal grant dollars be used as match dollars?

ELSON NASH: Yeah. That is a great question. There is a strong sense that one can leverage additional Federal resources. So, yes, there is encouragement with that, but here's the caveat. One must also recognize that that other Federal agency allows match. And so, for instance, here's a real obvious one, and that is the HUD program, HUD Choice—and many of the agencies that are involved in place-based initiatives, Department of Justice, Byrne Criminal Justice. I mentioned HUD. So those agencies, definitely, there's a sense of leveraging resources using Federal funds, but you should definitely double-check with the agencies that you are considering to make sure that it is an allowable match.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Great. Thank you. How about we get out of the weeds of finances for a little bit and answer some other questions?

ELSON NASH: Good questions.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Good questions, so please continue to send them in. We are responding as best we can. A couple quick points before we continue, a few people have asked if the slides will be available. They will be by close of business tomorrow, and you can find them as PromiseNeighborhoods.ed.gov.

We also had a question about the page numbers being referred to in the notice. So, for example, Juanita mentioned page 42 or 47. Every part of the notice in the Federal Register begins with the numbers 447. So just tack that on, and you'll be right on track with us.

Moving on to some other questions, let me see what we've got here. We have a general question of whether or not a community's size matters for the application.

ELSON NASH: In general, it's really up to you. What we don't want to do is, once again, give you a definition of a size, and that's not really your footprint. That's not really the boundary of the areas in which you're focused on, and so if you looked at or reviewed the applications of our current grantees, they range from a number of blocks all the way up to three counties. And it differs because, once again, a Promise Neighborhood could be a rural area. A Promise Neighborhood could be an urban area. A Promise Neighborhood could be a full-tribal reservation. It really depends on what you're focusing on and the community in which you're doing your endeavors.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Great. Thank you. Someone just asked, "Is there a specific project narrative form that we must use?"

ELSON NASH: There is. If you look inside—once you go inside Grants.gov, all of those forms will pop up. You'll be able to download those forms. Last week or a couple weeks ago, I had an e-mailed question about the form because one of the applicants couldn't see the form in the application instructions. We double-checked within Grants.gov, and there is all of the necessary forms that are in Grants.gov. So make sure you download those forms from Grants.gov.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Great. And we had another question similar to earlier. Could we confirm whether or not there will be planning grants available?

ELSON NASH: There will be no planning grants for this competition, and as a side note, it is important for applicants to know, as a part of reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Ed Act, Promise Neighborhoods was reauthorized in the Every Student Succeeds Act, and as a part of the reauthorization, the program only focuses on implementation grants. However, they did allow planning activities within the first year and part of the second year.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Great. And that actually answers several questions all in one.

ELSON NASH: Okay. Great.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: So I will pause for just a moment and please continue to send your questions in. These are a great. The more, the merrier.

ELSON NASH: Absolutely.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Can we point to any standards for reasonable costs for services provided?

ELSON NASH: You know, standards, once again, that's another issue that really—it depends on a lot of factors. It depends on the services that you're providing. It depends on the community that you're working in. What costs a certain thing in a rural area is different from what costs a certain thing in an urban area. So there is no standard, if you will, for costs. It really depends on your situation.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Great. Thank you. Moving back to the financial sector for a moment, one person asked a very pointed question referring to the 2016 FAQs.

ELSON NASH: Okay.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: This person is actually saying that the 2016 FAQ states that sub-awards or subcontracts are not authorized under Promise Neighborhoods. She wants to know "Does

that mean that all required procurement would need to take place prior to the completion of MOUs?" Yeah. Does that mean that any required procurements have to take place before the MOUs are done?

ELSON NASH: Not necessarily. No. I mean, there—let's just say, an ideal world, one would like to have all the MOUs in place, but we know that things change. Within the idea of a results framework, there actually may be—I hate to say it. There may be partners that you may not want to have a contract with. So, in some instances, there might be times when partners change and contracts change. So I think the issue is that, no, the MOUs don't have to preclude contracts, and, two, recognizing that these things do change oftentimes—well, all the time, when an applicant becomes a grantee, there is a negotiation period with the Department of Ed because, once again, we recognize that things change. And each year, grantees have to present their budgets to us. So there might be instances where things change, and we negotiate with the grantees each time.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Great. With respect to awards, does the Department of Ed expect mostly previously planning grantees to become implementation grantees, or is the field wide open?

ELSON NASH: The field is wide open. There are a number of communities that have implemented or started the model, the Promise Neighborhoods model, without receiving a planning grant. There are communities that have received a planning grant, and so it really is wide open. Hopefully, applicants are not discouraged if they did not receive a planning grant. I think if you have implemented the model, you've continued, you've followed the field, you've done the necessary needs assessment and segmentation analysis, those are the things that constitute being ready for applying for this opportunity.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: We received another question. This one is a little lengthy to provide context. So one person is asking about the applying organization. They say that their project involves collaboration among organizations with many different cultural competencies that's going to best serve their population. They're unsure of whether that collaborative can apply as an entity or if they need to have just one organization apply.

ELSON NASH: That sounds like something they're going to have to work out within themselves. Yeah. I can't quite answer that. That's something they're going to have to decide, who the best, quote/unquote, backbone organization is for your endeavor.

JUANITA GALLION: And we can refer them back to the—I'll just say also, Michael, refer them back to—it's page 44749 in the notice that gives the definition of an eligible organization.

ELSON NASH: Yes, definitely. Thank you.

JUANITA GALLION: And so to look closely at what's listed in that, and it might be that one organization in that collaborative needs to be the applicant, but you'd have to, as Elson said, decide. But I would point you to that as a good resource to just make sure that you're in line with the way that "eligible organization" as the applicant is being defined.

ELSON NASH: Absolutely. Thank you.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Yes. And more colloquially, that's what we refer to as the "backbone organization."

JUANITA GALLION: Yes, eligible. Yeah.

ELSON NASH: Yeah, yeah.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Great. Going back to the subcontracting question, to confirm sites that do become awardees may disburse funds to partners, correct, or is this considered an eligible subcontract?

ELSON NASH: So I think what folks were referring to in the Frequently Asked Questions is can they have sub-grants. The point is no to sub-grant. The issue is that what folks have done is they have had contracts subcontract, and within subcontracts, they have to follow the guidelines of our OMB circulars around contracting. And so therein lies the difference, sub-grants versus subcontracts.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Thank you, Elson. We're going to pause for just a moment.

Elson, can you confirm for someone that the Department of Ed will be giving five to seven grants this round?

ELSON NASH: We definitely hope so. It really depends on—so the reason we have a range, it depends on what the winning applicants place in their budgets, and so in previous rounds, there has been a range of what an applicant asks for. Not every applicant asks for the maximum amount, so it really depends on what a community feels is adequate, recognizing that whatever you ask for, you also have to match, and so that that's an important point. So that's why we have a range.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Someone just asked a question saying they were slightly confused by what you said before when you mentioned that there could be year-one planning. Could you just clarify a little bit what you mean by that?

ELSON NASH: Yeah. And so this is one of those things where you may have been multitasking and you caught that. So, in 2017, under the new legislation, Every Student Succeeds, that's

when our legislation kicks. Under the Every Student Succeeds Act, there is the eligibility. There is the opportunity for an applicant to have planning activities.

This year, we are not under the Every Student Succeeds Act, and we are not having a planning grant opportunity, and so the impetus behind this grant opportunity is around implementation. The idea is that every organization that applies should be ready to implement. That includes, if you look under Absolute Priority 1, those five overarching criteria of which No. 1 is submission of the plan and all of those things that go into submitting the plan.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Great. Thank you very much, Elson. We're going to wait for just another moment.

We have a question again referring to the FAQ.

ELSON NASH: Okay.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: One of our participants is asking whether or not money from the grant can be spent on program services because there seems to be a line saying funding should be spent on administration. Can money received be spent on programs?

ELSON NASH: Sure. Yes, yes. There has been, in the past, money spent on programming. There has been money spent on staffing and administration. Once again, it really depends on your situation.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: And then where can prospective applicants find guidelines on subcontracting?

ELSON NASH: The best place to look would be under the Uniform Guidelines. So if you look under—I would google EDGAR and then—I would look under EDGAR and then look specifically under discretionary grants, and under that, there should be some guidelines around contracting and subcontracting.

JUANITA GALLION: Michael, we can maybe add a link to EDGAR, to the resources section of this webinar when it gets posted online, where folks can go into EDGAR and look for some of those.

ELSON NASH: Okay. Great.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: So just a few points from different questions and comments that we have been receiving, the websites that we're referring to, there are a couple sources for regularly updated information. The most commonly accessed one is PromiseNeighborhoods.ed.gov. And as I mentioned before, we will be posting webinar recordings, slides, and transcripts to that website. So you can access them at any time.

We also had a few questions regarding planning grants and implementation grants. This time around is only for implementation grants. There are no planning grants being awarded.

One last question regarding the application, you mentioned that to be ready to apply, sites should have a needs assessment and a segmentation analysis done. Is there anything else that needs to be completed prior to beginning the application?

ELSON NASH: I think, once again, for all applicants, look under Absolute Priority 1.

JUANITA GALLION: Priority 1.

ELSON NASH: Absolute Priority 1 really does—it's fairly lengthy, but that gives you the comprehensive requirements that you must abide by, hence, Absolute Priority. So that really is your best resource to review.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: And then we just received a question regarding what applicants actually ask for as part of their application. Is there any advantage to asking for a lower amount, or is this something completely dependent on just the process?

ELSON NASH: It really is dependent on the applicant and, once again, the needs of your community.

What's most important is that you cover the real cost for doing business. I wouldn't shortchange myself, meaning the organization, or the community by thinking that a smaller ask will give you additional points—that's not the case—because you don't want to be in a situation where you get the grant and then, all of a sudden, you go, "Uh-oh. We don't have enough to cover costs." So make sure that you ask for the appropriate amount and you cover all the necessary costs related to your endeavor.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: With respect to project design and evidence, we received a question regarding theory of change, and I would just like to point out that we do have an upcoming webinar on Thursday that specifically addresses both the logic model and evidence requirements of this round of Promise Neighborhoods. So definitely check out that webinar. There is a link for you to register at PromiseNeighborhoods.ed.gov.

And just once again, can we clarify the distinction between previous planning grants and the planning in year one that can be a part of the new route?

ELSON NASH: So, once again, I just want to be clear. There is no planning grant for this round. In terms of the allowance of planning activities, that's for 2017. So there are two distinct things. 2016, this year, we are under the old language and old requirements, so therein lies the difference. 2017, if we have enough money, if we get appropriated enough money, there's the allowance of planning activities with the new legislation of which the Promise Neighborhoods

program was reauthorized. This year, we are not under the new legislation. We are only focusing on implementation grants.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Thank you very much, Elson. Just a couple more questions. We had one question about how to determine a low-performing district or a low-performing in a context when the State hasn't released the best data.

ELSON NASH: You know, that's one of those things that really is up to your State. It's not a Federal issue, and I think your State would appreciate that. It really is where you have to confer with your State or your LEA around those schools that you're targeting.

The other piece there that many of you are aware of within the needs assessment and segmentation analysis, you will have a sense of your property rates, number of children on a free and reduced school lunches. The school might even receive Title I funding from the Feds, but your best resource should be at the State and local level.

JUANITA GALLION: Yeah. And I would just add, Elson, again, in the notice, there is a definition around low-performing schools. It also talks about the difference between States that got some flexibility in defining, which might be the issue that the particular applicant—

ELSON NASH: Absolutely. Yes.

JUANITA GALLION: —is referring to, but it provides a little more information. It's on page 44750 of the notice under the definition for low-performing schools. There's a little more information, more detailed information there about how to address that issue, depending on what the context is in a particular State.

ELSON NASH: And Juanita is absolutely right. That's why I keep referring back to the States because in certain States, because they have received some flexibility, they actually call those schools "focus schools." So Juanita is right. Please look back on that page. What was it again?

JUANITA GALLION: It's 44750.

ELSON NASH: 44750. It refers to the definitions, and within those definitions, it oftentimes refers back to the States. So it's a very good question. It is not as straightforward, I know, as you would want it to be, but it's something that you really should be conferring at the State and local level.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Thank you very much, Juanita and Elson. Final question that we have for this webinar. We had a question about clarifying sections (b) and (c) from the selection criteria. Somebody wants to know if you could just distinguish a little bit between the general quality of the project design and the general quality of the project services. They are two separate categories, and I think this person is just looking for a little clarification between the two.

JUANITA GALLION: But project design is really about—it's really about the sort of design and the relationship between the things. So it's more focused on the evaluation, the theory behind it, sort of what's the cause and effect that you're trying to talk about, and services is really more about the partnerships, the relationships between them that are going to put those things into place that will lead to those outcomes that you're hoping for. And so they are related, but I think it's asking for specific things. So I'll go back and just stay on here for a minute. Elson, if you want to say anything about these?

ELSON NASH: Yeah. I often think of—I think of the project design as part of the overall—really part of the theory of change, theory of action. It's the description of the continuum of solutions. So, as Juanita alluded to, it's the design part. It's what you're going to do and how you're going to do it. It includes all of those various components of which we're talking best available evidence. It includes your partnerships, those assets at the local level, and then as you will hear on Thursday, that also includes the logic model. And so on Thursday, as a prelude, once again, think of the logic model as a design concept. So that's why it's in this section. It's also why this section has the most points, because you're going to be explaining how you're going to design all this, kind of an overall framework of what you're doing.

And then within project services, this is how you're explaining kind of the drilldown, if you will, so those actual services, how they will lead to rigorous academic standards. It's the formal and informal partnerships and the way in which you are holding your partners accountable, i.e., that results framework. Think of this as the doing part. Think of the design as the overarching 10,000-foot-level part. That's how I'm trying to give you some distinguishing characteristics between the two.

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: Great. Thank you, Elson. Once again, subsection (c) (1) is referring more to your opportunity to talk about how your idea is going to help the children in your footprint. You want to explain how the implemented program that you choose to implement is going to positively impact, a test, a result, some kind of indicator. So that would be the distinction.

ELSON NASH: Yep.

JUANITA GALLION: Great.

JUANITA GALLION: Any final questions?

MICHAEL BOCHNOVIC: It looks like that is about it. We got a big thank-you for the explanation.

ELSON NASH: Good.

JUANITA GALLION: It's a tricky distinction.

ELSON NASH: It is. It is. And these are the—this is, by far, probably the most in the weeds that we will probably get because this is the selection criteria, so great questions, very important questions. Part of what we wanted to do is kind of buildup. We have built up to this point. I urge you all to please come back on Thursday because, once again, logic model and evidence, those are two pieces of the puzzle that we did not have in previous competitions, so really hope—if you can't make it, definitely Friday, late Friday, download the recording and the slide deck so that you can review it.

JUANITA GALLION: Great. So thank you, Elson. Thank you, Michael. This will conclude our webinar. We appreciate you joining us. As Michael mentioned, the recording from today will be available by close of business tomorrow, as will the slide deck that we used, and again, we encourage you to go back and look at this, to look at the two previous webinars, to look at the resources that have been shared across the three presentations, and to tune in again or make sure you watch afterwards to Thursday's webinar. So thank you, everyone, very much.

ELSON NASH: Thank you.

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